

**Matter of Fact** By Joseph Alsop

**"HE COULDN'T DO MORE"**



Philadelphia—Philadelphia's 32 Ward—one of those Negro sections in the northern big cities which both Democrats and Republicans are now watching with breathless attention—is nowhere as bad as the worst of Harlem and nowhere as good as the best.

In this Philadelphia ward there is little to compare with wide areas of slum clearance housing that promise a new decency and hope to the poor in Harlem. There is nothing, either, quite so civil as Harlem's even wider areas of stinking cliff-high slum apartments that are fully as horrible as the worst slums of Bombay. The 32 Ward is, rather, a classical Negro section in the old style, where the Negroes have taken over street after street and dreary street built for fairly prosperous white people 70 or 80 years ago.

The more ambitious and successful Negro families live in—often even own—little stone-built row houses that must once have housed a solid middle class family apiece, and today house anywhere up to eight or ten Negro families apiece.

**PUSH** your way into these tenements past the children playing on the steps and sidewalk because they have nowhere else to play. Climb the rickety dark stairs. As you pass by, avert your eyes, if you are wise, from the single foul bathroom that serves the two or three families on each floor. Knock at the crazy doors. Peer into the crowded rooms, furnished with the squalid castoffs of our industrial civilization, whose products, somehow, do not seem to age very gracefully.

You are gripped—you must be gripped by a deep shame that this rich country lets so many of its citizens live in

such a manner. Even so, even the worst of Philadelphia's 32nd Ward lacks the dark, downright Asian squalor, the foulness and grim hopelessness of the worst of Harlem. And this difference seems to have considerable political importance, judging by the results of an intensive door-to-door inquiry recently conducted in company with a professional poller, John Kraft.

On a similar expedition in Harlem, this reporter's partner found that the slum-dwellers thought little about civil rights and were voting solidly Democratic simply because "The Democrats are the party of us poor people." In contrast, he also found a passionate preoccupation with civil rights wherever Negro families had achieved more decent living conditions; and in these sections of Harlem there was considerable resentment of Adlai E. Stevenson's "moderation" on the civil rights issue.

**IN PHILADELPHIA'S** 32 Ward, in contrast, where almost no one can escape from slum conditions but the slums are somewhat less appalling, the economic and civil rights issues are blended in almost everyone's mind. But here in Philadelphia, they seldom mention Adlai Stevenson's "moderation" on the civil rights; instead, they say, "The President couldn't do more to help our people."

Typical of the more articulate was Mrs. Irene Bennett, a sturdy, intelligent woman who works for Wanamakers and is rearing her large brood in part of one floor of a tumbledown house on Camac Street. Mrs. Bennett is no Stevenson enthusiast, but after careful thought she gives the greatest weight the President's inaction during the school troubles in the South.

"The deciding factor with me is which party is going to do the most for my people," she says. More belligerent, and more representative of the less thoughtful, more directly emotional voters was Miss Celia

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Cook, a little, white-haired, hard-working old lady who lives in a room like cave in one of the North 12th st. slums. "I don't like Republicans," said Miss Cook. "They're for the rich. And I don't like Mr. Eisenhower at all, either. He's done everything for the White people and nothing for my people. Why look at all those trouble down South. Isn't he President? Why can't he do something?"

**HOWARD** Norris, an ambitious young clerical worker who is buying his own little house on North st., took the exceptional view that "Although Eisenhower has ducked the civil rights issue, I always remember these Southern Governors are Democrats. So I'm for the Democrats just because I think they're the party of the little man."

But two of the rare Republican voters, ladies of rather obvious easy virtue, said they did not like the President because "It seems like he could've did a lot more for the colored people." They then added, with a giggle, that they were Republicans all the same. "Because everyone round here is a Republican."

That notion of the two ladies was certainly erroneous. The vast majority of the voters of the 32 Ward chose Adlai Stevenson four years ago. The Democratic lead was so decisive that there were few Republicans left to switch; yet we found a couple of switches none-the-less. Unless our rather large sample was somehow badly distorted, this crucial Negro ward of crucial Philadelphia should give Adlai Stevenson as large a proportional majority as he got four years ago. And if our switches are indicative, he may even gain a percentage point or two on top of that.

958, New York  
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**Editorial Comment**

**STEVENSON'S CAMPAIGNING FAVORS HELLS CANYON**

Oregon Democrats gave Adlai Stevenson a hearty welcome Wednesday when he came to press his campaign for election as President—and to give a boost to the candidates of his party for other offices. Stevenson is intelligent, articulate, stimulating. He would in our opinion make a very able President. To do so, however, he surely would have to shorten sail on many of his overtures for group votes which he has been making in his campaign. This was the basis for President Eisenhower's accusation that the Democrats were becoming "politically irresponsible." We think the charge could be tempered a bit by applying the discount of "campaign oratory." The trouble is that Stevenson has in his party many who would try to put all these promises into effect. They would quote from the text of his speeches to his own discomfort.

Ninety per cent parity for farmers with government security extended to growers of other than the basic crops, more generous aid to aged, government guaranteed health insurance, greater aid for education—all these, and others, and lower taxes—threaten the stability of the national treasury. The Democratic record is one of mounting taxes and mounting government paternalism. By committing himself so fully to this program of federal generosity, Stevenson departs from his previous endorsement of moderation. We regard Stevenson more highly than his campaigning warrants, but feel he has made himself a captive of old New-Fair Deal. —Oregon Statesman, Salem.

Mike Strauss, commissioner of reclamation under President Truman, said something here this week that deserves much more consideration than many who live in the Northwest probably will give it. Mr. Strauss said that the eyes of the nation are constantly directed to the course of water resources development in the Northwest for the obvious reason that such a great part of the nation's hydro electric potential is here.

This has long been evident. It was vividly pointed up when the Hells Canyon argument was raging. Many large newspapers in the eastern United States were pushing for the high dam because they thought it would insure best use of a resource that belongs to all the people of the United States. What we say and think about water resources development in this region is of vital interest everywhere because we will be direct beneficiaries.

It is for that reason that we have, time and again, questioned the approach taken by eastern Oregon's representative in Congress, Sam Coon. He opposed full development of the Snake river when he opposed a high Hells Canyon dam. And he has done nothing to get appropriations for construction of John Day dam, which has federal authorization. If Mr. Coon is not willing to go to bat for his region what must the people far removed from the region think?

The proponents of a high Hells Canyon dam took another sock on the jaw this week when a court decision upheld the recommendation of the Federal Power commission that Idaho Power company be permitted to

build three low head dams in the Hells Canyon stretch of the Snake river. It is too early, however, to count the high dam people down and completely out.

Illinois' Sen. Paul Douglas told a Democratic dinner meeting at Milton-Freewater last Saturday night that the election of a Democratic President and firmer control after this election of the House and Senate by Democrats could bring about reversal of the FPC decision and construction of the high dam. Seems to us that is a distinct possibility. —Pendleton East Oregonian.

**PASSENGER SERVICE**  
Reading the comment this week of L. R. Capron, vice president of the Burlington railroad, was refreshing, for Mr. Capron believes the pessimism of some railroad executives over the future of rail passenger business "is completely unfounded and the future looks good—if you give customers the right equipment and service."

Mr. Capron expressed his views in Portland this week and announced that his railroad will put a new Denver Zephyr in service Oct. 28, with entirely new sleeping accommodations at a low rate.

The new coaches, he said, for the first time bring comfortable sleeping accommodations to the coach fare passenger.

There will be none of the usual upper and lower berths. The entire train will be rooms and roomettes. Individual rooms for coach fare passengers will include a window seat that becomes a bed and private lavatory

and toilet facilities. Additional fare from Denver to Chicago will be only \$7.50, he said.

Burlington, always successful on its Chicago to Denver run and the pioneer in diesel-powered streamliners, is venturing millions, and doing it with confidence, in putting on the new equipment.

Out this way, we are being "brain washed" by the Southern Pacific into the belief that passenger service by rail is a thing of the past. —Ashland Tidings.

**EVERYTHING IN SIXES**  
Detroit—(AP)—With John G. Andrew, everything comes in sixes and it's not his lucky number. Andrew, 44, was arrested for trying to sell football tickets for a \$6 profit and was given a choice of a \$60 fine or 60 days in jail. He paid the fine.

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